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### **National Marine Sanctuary Foundation Honors Phil Fernandez**

From serving on advisory councils, to removing marine debris, to documenting whale behavior and educating school children, volunteers for NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries perform a variety of critical functions and have donated more than one million hours of community service to help conserve the country's ocean and coastal treasures for future generations.

Phil Fernandez of Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i, a volunteer at Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, was one of the 14 volunteers at the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation's 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C., last month. The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation is a private, non-profit organization that assists national marine sanctuaries with education and outreach programs designed to preserve, protect and promote meaningful opportunities for public interaction with these special places in our ocean and Great Lakes.

Fernandez serves as the Fishing Representative on the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. Last year, Fernandez spent countless hours leading the efforts of the council's Offshore Development Working Group to develop recommendations to inform sanctuary management on emerging issues facing the State of Hawai'i including alternative energy production and offshore aquaculture.

"Phil has been a dedicated volunteer, serving the sanctuary through his efforts to protect cultural and marine resources while ensuring that subsistence, recreational and economic benefits of the sanctuary are considered," said Malia Chow, sanctuary superintendent. "The Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary is proud to recognize Phil as our volunteer of the year."

The sanctuary is administered by a partnership of NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the State of Hawai'i through the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). The sanctuary works to protect humpback whales through research, education, conservation and stewardship. Join us on [Facebook](#).

DLNR's mission is to enhance, protect, conserve and manage Hawaii's unique and limited natural, cultural and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of visitors and the people of Hawaii nei. Join us on [Facebook](#).

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).

#### **On the Web:**

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary: <http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov>

NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries: <http://sanctuaries.noaa.gov>

State of Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources: <http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/>